

II. Remarks

Reconsideration and allowance of the subject application are respectfully requested.

Claims 1, 4-26, 28-52, 54-64, and 66-95 are pending in the application. Claims 1, 23, 42, 51, 56, 62, 68, 74, 79 and 85 are independent.

Applicants gratefully acknowledge that Claims 42-50, 56-64, 66-78, and 85-95 are allowed, and that Claims 4-13 and 31-41 are indicated as containing allowable subject matter.

In this Amendment, Claim 16 has been amended to correct a minor informality. No new matter has been added.

Claims 1, 14-15, 16-26, 28-30, 51-52, 54-55, 79-80, 81-82, and 83-84 were rejected as being unpatentable over Harris, Umeda, and Kuno, for the reasons discussed on pages 2 - 9 of the Office Action. Applicants respectfully traverse all art rejections.

Harris was filed in the USPTO December 2, 2000 and is inapplicable as a reference in view of the previously filed Rule 131 Declaration by the inventors antedating U.S. Patent No. 6,530,664 (filed April 24, 2001) to Vanderwerf et al., U.S. Patent No. 6,179,426 (filed March 3, 1999) to Rodriguez, Jr. et al. If the previously filed Rule 131 Declaration was effective to overcome a March 3, 1999 reference, it is certainly effective to overcome a December 2, 2000 reference.

In view of the above, it is believed that this application is now in condition for allowance, and a Notice thereof is respectfully requested.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our Washington, D.C. office by telephone at (202) 625-3507. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our address given below.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Richard P. Bauer", written over a horizontal line.

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